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**CONTENTS.**

	PAGE		PAGE		PAGE
<b>NOTES OF THE WEEK</b>	57	<b>CORRESPONDENCE:</b>		<b>REVIEWS:</b>	
The Corn Bill and the Radicals	60	Currency Inflation (F. Faithfull Begg)	64	My Reminiscences	67
Italy's War Aims	60	The French Canadians and the War	65	La Dame de Bon Secours	68
Too Many Cooks	61	"A Frolic of Bureaucracy"	66	Soldier Stories	69
Airfare After the War: Present and Future Problems	62	Windsor	66	Latest Books	70
The Bandstand	63	Literary Criticism	67	<b>FINANCE:</b>	
		"Lord Bacon"	67	Business and the City	70
		Bread in Italy	67	Insurance	72

**NOTES OF THE WEEK.**

On our side of the Western front during the week there have been raids and intense gun duels, but no outstanding event. The French are showing great dash and endurance in meeting the incessant attacks of the Germans. The Chemin des Dames, with its valuable observation posts, and in particular the California Plateau, near Craonne, have been assailed with great violence, but the gains of the Crown Prince's army have been only temporary, and nothing has been secured to compensate for heavy losses in men and material.

In Galicia the absence of discipline on the Russian side has led to a serious retreat on a long front. The enemy has taken Halisz and Tarnopol and Stanislaw and has crossed the Sereth. The Russians are being driven back to the Carpathians, but on the north of their line they have taken the offensive near Dvinsk and Smorgon, their movements here too being hampered by the instability of their soldiers. Positions have been evacuated without the firing of a shot. Further south the Rumanians have made a noteworthy advance, breaking the enemy's line on a wide front and securing several hundreds of prisoners.

On Wednesday, during the debate in the House on food prices and profiteers, Mr. Clynes, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Food Ministry, announced that the Government proposed to reduce the price of the quartern loaf to 9d. The reduction will be made possible by a subsidy from the Exchequer. The housewife will rejoice at this substantial concession. Bakers, however, will be allowed to make an additional charge for delivery and for giving credit. Mr. Clynes also announced that experiments were being made with a view to securing tea at reasonable prices. There is at present a reaction in favour of the food speculator, who by some accounts would seem to be non-existent, or *bon comme le pain*, let us say. But the proof of the goodness does not lie in the prices.

It must be very difficult for the hotels and clubs to keep within their allowance of meat and sugar. The Carlton Hotel was fined the other day for exceeding its weekly meat allowance by 78 lbs. and its sugar allowance by 58 lbs. Counsel stated that the hotel had been in the habit of putting each customer's allowance of sugar in a small envelope, hoping that what was left behind would make up the deficiency in the kitchen. Alas for the demoralising effect of war! People put in their pockets and carried off the sugar they did not use. This reminds us of the old story of the client of a French restaurant who exclaimed, "Where are the toothpicks? You always used to supply them." And the waiter replied: "Yes, Monsieur, it is true that in the time the patron used to supply tooth-picks. But figure to yourself the baseness of men: they took them away with them!"

Another "transient and embarrassed phantom," the Prince Lvoff, has disappeared from the stage of the Russian revolution, and his place is taken by M. Kerenski. Who and what is M. Kerenski? We have heard him described as Cromwell, as Napoleon, as Saint Just. Which is he, for it makes some difference? Cromwell and Napoleon were the soldiers called in by democracy in despair to restore order, in the doing of which they made themselves emperors. If Kerenski is of that breed we welcome him, for he may yet save Russia with a whiff of shrapnel. Saint Just was a saturnine, canting sycophant of Robespierre's, who after murdering other citizens was himself murdered. Let us hope that Kerenski is not like Saint Just, for if he is, God help Russia!

Might it not be as well if our mercurial Prime Minister, before beplastering revolutionists with his praise, would inform himself as to the actual state of things in Russia? We are told that it is "good business" to pat the Russian revolutionists on the back. It has not proved so up to date. Charles I. was at least tried by broad-brimmed Bradshaw, if no other,

before he was deposed and decapitated. The Czar of Russia, without any trial of any kind, upon the mere assertions of anarchists, was seized in his own train, deposed, stripped of his property, and thrust into prison with his wife and family. And the British House of Commons, in a fine revolutionary frenzy, despatched fraternal greetings and congratulations to those who deposed their Sovereign! Had the British Ambassador and the British Government exerted themselves more effectively to purify the Czar's *entourage* and to postpone the revolution, instead of encouraging it, we should to-day be in sight of peace.

And now the great Empire of Russia is a dissolving view of anarchy, a mere sprawling welter of confusion, a geographical expression. Patriot calls on patriot and Committee calls on Committee to save the revolution, ruthlessly, if need be, by shooting other patriots. It is not by Provisional Cabinets or self-elected Councils of Soldiers and Workers, or by Committees or resolutions that a war is waged, but by discipline and a firm Government. The Russian army is now in full retreat because the soldiers are bored and want to go home. The Czar Nicholas, German wife and corrupt Ministers and all that, was, in our poor judgment, a more useful Ally than the great and glorious democracy. He saved the situation in 1914, or helped to save it, quite as much as the Belgians, and we showed our gratitude in 1916 by refusing to lift a finger to save his person, and by slobbering fraternally over the anarchists who flung him into prison.

Mr. Lloyd George's merit as a controversialist is that his glancing humour makes his opponent ridiculous. His speech at the Queen's Hall, accompanied as it was by a continual ripple of laughter from the audience, was the most effective answer to the pompous boasting inanities of Dr. Michaelis. The Germans have no sense of humour—bullies never have—and nothing makes them so mad as being laughed at. What more telling method of dealing with those who believe they can terrorise the world into submission by frightfulness than to poke fun at their six weeks' march to Paris, their Zeppelins, and their submarines? The new Chancellor's speech was like a reversible coat, meant to serve for either event, peace or war. We should like to have seen the faces with which our Prime Minister's reply was read in Berlin.

There is something supremely absurd, and therefore thoroughly German, in Dr. Michaelis's remark that he regards the intervention of the United States "without serious concern." The Americans have a population of over a hundred millions; they are as wealthy as any other two European Powers were before the war, their superiority in mechanical invention is unquestioned, and their resources are untouched. Yet Dr. Michaelis regards their participation in the war "without serious concern"! Mr. Lloyd George's figures about our shipbuilding and our food supplies, if they are allowed to reach the German public, ought to make the saner portion of the nation pause. Unfortunately the Germans do not believe that a Minister can speak the truth. They know their own officials.

The puzzling thing about the situation is that the high finance, which is (with the exception of Krupps) entirely in the hands of the Jews, does not make its influence felt, and instil a little sanity into the heads of generals and professors. Men like Herr Ballin, for instance, must know that the prolongation of what has become a war of mere exasperation can only swell the bill of costs and render more certain Germany's economic isolation. The neutrality of the United States was the one chance of Germany's rehabilitation, and that chance has been sacrificed to an insane belief that England could be starved by submarines. Raw materials and customers are the two things needful for Germany's recovery, and where will she get either?

After another twelve months' war, who will make a commercial treaty with Germany? Who will shake hands with her Ambassadors?

Are President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George justified in drawing a distinction between the German Government and the German people? We cannot see that they are. The whole German nation—men, women, and children—went into war screaming "*Deutschland über alles*." The whole nation exulted over the sinking of the *Lusitania*, and every submarine or air-raid success is greeted with flags and shouting. The soldiers who ravished nuns, crucified Canadians, hacked the hands off children, shot Nurse Cavell, and burned Ypres and Louvain, are not professional soldiers, but just ordinary German citizens from the desk or the plough, from the schloss or the Berlin flat. They obeyed orders, no doubt; but would British soldiers have obeyed such orders? And why, supposing the Kaiser and his generals deposed, must we give the fraternal hug of democracy to these brutes?

Mr. Bonar Law, in his demand for a vote of credit of £650,000,000, dealt in figures which none but the professional financier can so much as dimly realise. We are, it appears, spending at the rate of £7,000,000 a day, the total cost of the war up to date being £5,292,000,000, of which, roughly speaking, a thousand millions are loans to our Allies and Dependencies. The actual excess over the estimate is £155,000,000, of which about two-thirds are spent on Navy, Army, and munitions, and one-third on increased advances to Allies and Colonies. Seven millions a day is two thousand five hundred and fifty-five millions a year, and it looks as if we should not finish the war under eight or ten thousand millions. The Crimean War cost about seventy millions.

This is not the place or the time to discuss the vast questions of financial policy which these incalculable sums open up. There is little or no prospect of a remission of taxation after the war or during the life of the present generation. We note with pleasure Mr. McKenna's promise to support the Chancellor of the Exchequer in any effort to curtail expenditure, but we cannot follow him into his argument about inflation of prices, which is dealt with in another part of this REVIEW. The State has taken under its control almost every important branch of national industry, and the State—i.e., the nation—must bear the cost of that disastrous policy, which only war can justify.

What is the meaning of this craze for railway managers? If a railway manager can manage to escape the censure of his board he will sooner or later be clutched by Mr. Lloyd George, haled before the King to be knighted—"dubb'd with unhatch'd rapier upon carpet consideration"—and placed at the head of a Government Department. Should there not happen to be a vacancy at the moment when the railway manager swims into the Prime Minister's ken a new department will be created. Sir Eric Geddes is a railway manager, and so is Sir Guy Calthrop. The Prime Minister collects railway managers as furiously as the father of Frederick the Great collected six-foot guardsmen. As soon as the old king espied a tall man in the streets he kidnapped him. The moment Mr. Lloyd George descries a railway manager he knights him.

"Revolution is catching" is one of the Prime Minister's pet phrases at this moment. It is true, but it is a pity Mr. Lloyd George did not at an earlier date reflect that by all his fine words about democracy he was spreading rather than staying the contagion. The attempt now being made by certain sections of the Labour Party to establish, with the aid of foreign revolutionaries, "Workers' and



Soldiers' Councils" in this country is a very dangerous conspiracy against society. We are glad to know that it has had very little success either with soldiers or workmen; but that is no reason why it should not be carefully watched. In ordinary peaceful times we might rely on the common sense of the British working man to reject such perilous plots. But we live in times when all things are possible. Naturally the responsible leaders of Labour are aghast at the abyss opening under their feet.

One of the most disquieting signs of the times is the tendency of power to pass from moderate to extreme men. Power in Ireland has passed from the hands of the Nationalist leaders into those of the Sinn Feiners. In the Labour world power is rapidly passing from the hands of the leaders, the trade union officials and Members of Parliament, into the hands of the shop stewards; and now it looks as if it was about to pass from the shop stewards into the hands of Continental secret societies. In the underworld of labour there are several able men of whom the journalists and the politicians have never heard, but who are all the more dangerous by their obscurity, and who are working mole-like for the revolution. It is not the tub-thumpers or the orators who are to be feared so much as the secret organisers.

Major Rowland Hunt asked the Home Secretary on Thursday whether he was aware that a meeting of the so-called Workers' and Soldiers' Union was to be held at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, on Saturday, which was to be attended by a deputation of Leninites, or pro-German Russians, one of whom was organising resistance to the Bill for compelling aliens of friendly nationalities to enlist. It is obvious that the Home Office knows very little about these Russian delegates, whom we believe to be dangerous characters. But how comes it that Russians of doubtful political antecedents are allowed to come here? We believe that the character of these missionaries was vouched for by Sir George Buchanan. Our Ambassador in Petrograd should be called upon to explain.

The Committee appointed to inquire into medical examinations under the Military Service Act has gone far beyond its reference, for it recommends that the whole business of recruiting, the getting and exemption of men, as well as their medical examination, should be transferred from the War Office to the Local Government Board. Lord Derby warmly supports the Committee; we agree with both, and as the Prime Minister has said "all right," presumably the thing may be regarded as done. The scandals connected with Army doctors are before the public; but the unsatisfactory conduct of the so-called military representatives has not been exposed from patriotic motives.

The military representative belongs, too often, to one of two classes of officer. Either he is a dug-out, some choleric half-pay major, too old or too incompetent to be given a military job, or he is one of the officers of the New Army who has what Americans call "a pull," or who is too delicate to be sent abroad or employed in one of the big camps. The dug-out is merely gruff, imperious, and ignorant of the conditions of civil life. The military representative of the second type is more offensive. He is often a young broker or solicitor who, dressed in a little brief authority and a new suit of khaki, is resolved to show his smartness and knowledge of the world by insulting both the tribunal and the persons who appear before it. As our modern armies are citizen forces, it is high time recruiting was transferred from military to civilian hands.

The wrath of the Conservatives at the addition of Mr. Churchill and Mr. Montagu to the Government does not diminish by the discovery of its inward significance. It is now clear that Mr. Lloyd George is

building up a party of his own out of his own friends and such of Mr. Asquith's men as he thinks it worth while to seduce. The financial support of the great house of Montagu has, we understand, been withdrawn from the Liberal Party: hence the rage at the Reform Club. Obviously Mr. Lloyd George means to lead a Labour Party, on to the tails of which the Tories can cling if they like, and which will be tooth and nail opposed to the Asquithites. The Tories complain that their own leaders do not insist on the maintenance of the equilibrium. But, as the Tammany boss said to his critics when caught stealing the city cash, "What are you going to do about it?"

Peace debates, whether in the Reichstag or the House of Commons, are at present matters of form, for the reason that each party still thinks itself in a position of superiority. We point to the blockade and the German Colonies; the Germans point to Belgium, Northern France, and Eastern Europe. Mr. Asquith touched the root when he said that neither Dr. Michaelis, the Reichstag, nor the German people matter: it is the military chiefs who decide. Mr. Snowden's statement that the French soldiers do not support their Government was the most mischievous in the debate, and elicited from Mr. O'Grady the retort that Mr. Snowden's friends were dabbling in revolutionary politics. The points at issue are quite clear—viz., (1) Evacuation of Belgium and Northern France with compensation; (2) restoration to France of Alsace-Lorraine; (3) German Colonies in Africa; (4) commercial treaties.

We do not question the sincerity of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's pacifist motion in the House of Commons, and we are in favour of allowing everybody to have his say, however misguided or perverse we may think him. The most effective way of countering the pacifists is to show the disastrous results of their policy. It is a commonplace that the suppression of a book or an opinion enhances its authority, and more often than not makes people think there must be some truth in what it is sought to suppress. This, of course, only applies to honest and respectable pacifists. The agitation that is being engineered by foreign anarchists under the pretence of seeking peace has in reality a very different object—that, namely, of starting a revolution in this country on the Russian pattern.

A conscientious objector brought an action against the colonel of his dépôt for false imprisonment and assault. Amongst the forms of assault alleged by the plaintiff was that the colonel had spat in his face. This the colonel denied and called a friend as witness. The friend swore that the colonel had not spat in the C.O.'s face, but he explained that when the colonel was excited his method of elocution was such that he diffused a spray upon his interlocutor. "The witness means," said Mr. Justice Darling, "that spitting is a *façon de parler*."

By the death of the fourth Viscount Frankfort de Montmorency without brother or son one of the most gorgeous titles of the Union creations is for the moment vacant. In the middle of the eighteenth century one Redmond Morres was M.P. for Dublin in Grattan's Parliament and became a Privy Councillor. He left two sons, of whom the elder was useful to Castlereagh in the Union business, and was made Baron Frankfort in the peerage of Ireland in 1800. In 1816 he was raised to the dignity of Viscount Frankfort de Montmorency, the family name, by Royal licence, being changed from Mountmorres to Montmorency. The line of the elder son is now extinct, and the representative of the second son is Major Hervey de Montmorency, now serving in the artillery at the front, who, we understand, will claim the title. Byron had a sly jest at some of Castlereagh's titles when he introduced in "Don Juan" a "Lord Mount Coffee-house."

## THE CORN BILL AND THE RADICALS.

THE "Daily News," which we take to be the leading organ of the Liberal party, is cutting its economic wisdom teeth. The process is always painful, and is generally accompanied by fretfulness.

"For there was never yet philosopher  
That could endure the toothache patiently,  
However they have writ the style"

of Gardiner, and made a push at votes and Socialism. We are therefore not surprised to find our esteemed contemporary raging over the discovery that State Socialism, which it has been pushing for years in the belief that it would be paid for by the classes, must be paid for by the masses as well as the classes. The "Bourgeois Gentilhomme" was astonished to find he had been talking prose all his life. The "Daily News" and some Liberal and Labour politicians are surprised to find they have been practising Protection for the last ten years, and they are angry when they are called upon to pay for Protection out of the public purse. State Socialism is only Protection in another guise. The fixing of a minimum wage, the limitation of hours, and the compulsory regulation of profits are just as much measures of Protection as the erection of a tariff wall against foreign competition, and have to be paid for in the long run by the general public. The moment that you go outside the market, and forbid higgling and the law of supply and demand, you get into the region of Protection, the cost of which must fall on the community. When Protection in the form of State Socialism was first taken up some ten years ago the Radicals fondly believed that the increased cost of higher wages and shorter hours would be paid by the capitalists. But, of course, the capitalists merely passed it on to the consumers in the form of higher prices. Then came the war, and prices rose so rapidly that the State was obliged to fix the prices of commodities. Now when you force the employer to pay more than the market price for his labour, and force him to take less than the market price for his commodity, the difference must be paid out of the public purse. Commercial loss there must be on these lines, and as it can no longer be recovered from the consumer it must be recovered from the national exchequer. You may make the price of bread and meat what you like. Lord Rhondda may decree that the quarter loaf shall be sold for fivepence and a pound of beef for a shilling. Nothing is easier; but the loss must be paid by somebody. It is no doubt unpatriotic of the farmer to refuse to produce wheat at a loss; but he does, or rather he can't help refusing. And if you force him to pay his labourers 25s. a week instead of 15s., a bounty or subsidy he must have, unless you stand over him with a pistol and force him to grow wheat at a loss. Amongst many other truths which this war has uncovered is this one, that you may expel supply and demand with a Parliamentary pitchfork, but they will come back on you. State Socialism is a fine-sounding, specious, pretentious thing. Now that it stands forth in its true shape as Protection the Liberals shrink back in anger from its contact. We dislike the theory of Protection as much as anyone, even the "Daily News": we prefer abstractedly Free Trade and Individualism. But then we do not shout for Protection in the shape of minimum wage, and against its logical corollary the State subsidy. Moreover, we recognise that when the theory does not fit the facts, it is, in nine cases out of ten, the theory which has to be changed. The German guns have blown the theory of Free Trade and Individualism into the air as completely as Bonaparte's whiff of grapeshot blew away the sacred right of insurrection. Reluctantly and slowly we have swallowed the fact that we are in for an era of State regulation and Protection. "*Dudum enim circumrodo, quod devorandum est*," as Cicero said, when he accepted the fact of Octavian's victory.

So much for the principle, which is all that is really worth discussing. The details of the Corn Bill are comparatively unimportant, and do not relate to the

year that is passing but to 1918. The agricultural labourer is to receive a minimum wage of 25s. a week. As has been pointed out, the agricultural labourer in many parts of Scotland now receives 40s. a week; but then he does more work than the farm-hand in Southern England. This minimum wage of 25s. as compared with the average pre-war wage of 17s. 9d. means to the farmer during the period 1918 to 1922 an increase of £59,455,000 in cost of production, and the State guarantees him against a possible fall of prices to pre-war standard by a public liability amounting to £68,161,409. This liability takes the form of a guarantee of minimum prices, that is to say, if the market price falls below a certain figure the State will pay the difference. The proposal to raise the minimum wage from 25s. a week to 30s. would have imposed upon the farmers an additional liability of £40,000,000, and was rejected by the House of Commons by 301 to 102 votes. We cannot understand how anyone can oppose the Corn Bill, unless he is blinded by the vulgarest kind of class prejudice, hatred of landlords and farmers. We observe that the tone and attitude of the Liberals in Parliament is very different from that of the Liberal Press. So far as we know no Liberal politician of leading, not to say light, has opposed the Corn Bill as a present to the landlords and farmers. We quite understand Mr. Runciman's speech and the votes of the 102 Radicals. It was expedient to record the fact, for use at the next election, that the Liberal remnant had voted for 30s. a week instead of 25s.—the old party game. That is what Mr. Lloyd George meant when he said that the Press is "not responsible." Thank God, the Press is not responsible, in the sense of being answerable to constituents, or the remnants of free thought and free speech still left to us would be destroyed.

## ITALY'S WAR AIMS.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S "reply" to the German Chancellor was curiously silent upon one aspect of the international situation. Much was said about the "democratisation" of Germany; nothing about the democratisation or liberation of the Austrian countries. Nor was there reference to the situation in Turkey, the future of the Balkans, or the claims and aspirations of our Italian Ally. These omissions may be merely accidental, for an orator cannot cover all the ground in a single speech, and the Prime Minister had his eye upon Dr. Michaelis. But it would be well if some member of the War Cabinet were to take an early opportunity of defining, with as much precision as the circumstances permit, the policy we intend to pursue in regard to South-Eastern Europe, when the time comes for making peace.

Some such declaration is required, and has not yet been given. Mr. Lloyd George has, indeed, said that our policy in the Balkans throughout the war has been a train of errors and miscalculations. "We have tried every kind of mistake." This is only too true, and it is something to have it authoritatively admitted; but better still would be the assurance that similar blunders will be avoided in the future by a closer grasp of realities. We should feel more comfortable if we had solid grounds for believing that the statesmen of London and Paris knew exactly what they wanted done in this quarter of the world, and saw their way clearly through the maze of conflicting ambitions and racial complications. The "Eastern Question," in one form or another, has had as large a share in causing the war as Prussian militarism, which has found its opportunity in the political and national instability that has prevailed from the Bohemian mountains to the Persian Gulf. It will find it there again if *Mittleuropa*, the Balkan lands, and Asia Minor are to be left to another generation of unrest, internecine quarrels, and dangerous external rivalries.

The subject must have come up at the Paris Conference, and the Italian representatives have doubt-



less had a good deal to say upon it. In preparation for the event there has been a remarkably candid article in an Italian newspaper, which is understood to be the "organ" of that reticent, but clear-headed and resolute politician, Baron Sonnino. The Italian Foreign Minister believes in *Realpolitik* as thoroughly as any German diplomatist of the Bismarkian school, though he does not approach his aim with the same combination of ruthlessness and fraud. He holds that Italy is too poor a country, and still too new in the circle of the Great Powers, to be able to afford, like the United States, the luxury of a sentimental war. Her Government can only justify the sacrifices it has brought upon its people by securing for them the territorial and strategical advantages which will make their future outlook safe, achieve the consummation of their national integrity, and yield them fuller opportunities for economic development. No patriotic Italian can honestly favour a peace "without annexations or indemnities." Such a peace would stultify all his country's action since the beginning of 1915. Italy went to war for annexations and indemnities. In his cool and incisive despatches to Vienna, which preceded the Italian intervention, Baron Sonnino deliberately made the case against Austria one of compensation for breach of contract. "You agreed with us," he said, in effect, "not to alter the *status quo* in the Balkans. But you have altered it by forcing war upon Serbia. Thereby you violate Article VII. of the Triple Alliance Treaty, and you modify the territorial balance to our detriment. You will be good enough to make compensation by handing over Trieste and the Trentino, and agreeing to give us a free hand as regards Dalmatia and the Adriatic. We always had a claim to the frontier districts which are Italian by race and history. Our forbearance to press for these was part of a general arrangement with you, sealed by treaty. As you have chosen to break the treaty, our claim revives, and we intend to enforce it; and since you have flung aside the mutual self-denying ordinance for the trans-Adriatic countries, we are no longer bound by it either, and shall push our way there with due regard to our own just interests and those of the various nationalities in these regions."

This is the Italian point of view—a perfectly sound and reasonable one which Italy's Allies had better understand and respect. If they do not, they will be "asking for trouble." Italy, like the rest of us, is anxious to cut the claws of Prussian and Austrian militarism and deliver Europe from the perpetual menace of armed violence. But her people did not go to war, like President Wilson, to "make the world safe for democracy"; nor do they sympathise with the Russian visionaries who, when they have finished lynching and shooting one another, are going to deliver humanity from the curse of "imperialism." The majority of the Italians—like the majority of the Americans, if the truth could be told—do not care the equivalent of twopence for democracy in the abstract; and as for imperialism—they are out for imperialism in the sense that they want to convert a restricted and fettered kingdom into a great, secure, and advancing Empire. They mean to be masters, for the first time, in their own house; and to obtain some footing in certain other houses in their immediate neighbourhood.

A peace without annexations, a peace which put things back substantially where they were in 1914, would not fulfil these national aspirations. Still less would the "sacred egoism" of Italy be satisfied by a peace which despoiled Austria mainly for the benefit of Slavs and Roumanians. Signor Giolitti, the pro-German "boss" of Italian politics, urged his countrymen to remain neutral because, he said, they could always get a *parecchio*, which means a small gratuity or *douceur*, out of Austria by negotiation. But Giolitti was thrust out of politics because the people of Italy were not content with a *parecchio*, and were determined to have something substantial. If the war

ends without leaving them in possession of the *Italia Irredenta* of the mountain frontier, as well as the Triestine, Istria, a long slice of the Dalmatian coast, and Avlona, they will be deeply mortified. The realisation of their aim is contingent on two factors: First, the defeat of Austria and, secondly, the limitation of Serbian ambitions within moderate bounds. And this latter point is the one on which they must have a complete understanding with the Allied statesmen. There is no reason why the legitimate aspirations of Serbia should not be gratified by arrangement with Italy. She can have a quite sufficient access to the Adriatic and a strip of coast which would include Cattaro and another good harbour or two, perhaps Ragusa. But when she is asking for all Dalmatia, coast and *Hinterland*, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina, with Istria and Slovenia and Croatia, and a bit of Albania, she demands a great deal too much. Italy is not fighting Austria to give Serbia the hegemony of South-Eastern Europe, and create a Jugoslav State of twelve or fourteen millions, with the best harbours on the Adriatic. Poor little plundered and eviscerated Serbia is in no condition to face such destinies. She had better be left quietly to restore her devastated soil and make good the ravages of war by sober, unambitious labour.

Her peasants ask no more. It is a small knot of "intellectuals" resident abroad who are propagating the "Greater Serbia" idea, and issuing maps in which they draw the new frontier across the very fields and valleys which have run red with the blood of Italian soldiers during the past two years. It is much to be regretted that this agitation is assisted by a busy little group of professors and journalists in this country, who are "working" the Press and public opinion here for the same object. In lectures and essays and articles they preach the dismemberment of Austria and the foundation on its ruins of the Greater Bohemia and the Greater Serbia. They are putting their zeal and ability to a mischievous purpose. They discourage the growing peace party in Austria by enabling the pro-Germans and the Magyar extremists to say that England will be content with nothing but the complete annihilation of the Dual Monarchy. In Italy they have roused suspicion and resentment. Angry patriots and insidious Giolittians point out that after all the *Entente* will do no more for Italy than the Central Powers, and that the Italian influence might as well be ousted from the Balkans by the Austrians as by an aggressive Slavdom under the patronage of Great Britain. It is a serious matter for the Western Governments and the Western peoples. We shall be "backing the wrong horse" again if, in our sympathy for Serbs, or Albanians, or Wallachs, or Bulgars, or any other of these mixed, half-baked, Slavo-Turanian units, we alienate the great Latin nation, which is the repository and inheritor of the oldest civilisation and the most finished culture in Southern Europe, a nation which means to play a great part in the world, with our help or without it.

#### TOO MANY COOKS.

THE summary by Mr. Barnes of the Reports of the Commission on Industrial Unrest will serve to remind us to what an extent we are suffering from over-government, from what is now described by that French-Greek word as bureaucracy, mispronounced "buroccracy." If the over-government produced good results, we might suppress as pedantic our objection to the creation of a huge Government kitchen, in which the official cooks tumble over one another and spoil the dishes. But the effect upon the production of wrath is retardative, and is daily growing more so.

We cannot remember the names of all the departments and new bureaux that deal with Labour, but here are eleven principal ones. (1) Ministry of Labour; (2) Board of Trade; (3) Ministry of Muni-

tions; (4) Admiralty; (5) War Office; (6) Board of Agriculture; (7) Committee on Food Production; (8) Food Control Committee; (9) National Service Bureau; (10) Coal Controller and Bureau; (11) Reconstruction Committee. There may be others, we feel sure there are; but these will do to begin with. Now let us give two instances of the muddlement that results. A short time ago there was a demand for five thousand hands to pick fruit in a north-eastern district of Scotland, where the growing of fruit is an organised industry. On the importance of fruit as food at this moment there is no need to dwell. The fruit-growers, admonished by the printed regulations regarding the employment of labour, applied in the first instance to the Ministry of Labour, whence they were punctiliously passed on to the Board of Agriculture. The Minister of Agriculture at once discerned that this was the business of the Food Production Committee, whose chairman was convinced that quite clearly it lay within the sphere of the Food Controller. In the meantime the fruit was unpicked, and the fruit-growers naturally cried aloud: "Gentlemen, whilst you are handing us on from one committee to another our fruit is rotting. Give us the five thousand fruit-pickers, and settle amongst yourselves afterwards whose business it is!"

Here is another and a more serious example of paralysis by over-government. If there is one industry which at this hour is absolutely vital, it is the treatment of coal in coke-ovens for the production of coke for steel furnaces, and the distillation of the bye-products for explosives. The manager of a group of collieries in Yorkshire informs us that for weeks his coke-ovens have been standing idle because the Coal Controller and the Minister of Munitions cannot settle whose duty it is to supply him with coal. Without the bye-products distilled from coal not an ounce of explosives can be made, and here we have the Ministry of Munitions carrying on a correspondence with the Controller of Coal as to who must find the coal necessary to feed the ovens! It goes without saying that neither the Controller of Coal nor the Minister of Munitions knows anything about coal or munitions. For the one was a railway manager and the other was (until a few days ago) a medical professor, and is now a professional politician. Can what a French writer calls "The Cult of Incompetence" go farther?

This is the humorous side of over-government. Its serious side is that it "rattles the nerves" of the working-classes at a time when it is essential that they should preserve balance of mind. The working man is irritated by being "messed about," as he phrases it, by Government officials who don't know his business or their own. There are too many of these overlapping committees and bureaux, which are too often ruled by politicians devoid of tact, or by business men who have specialised in some other branch of industry than the one which they are appointed to control. We recognise the difficulty of finding the right man to handle the various departments of industry. We admit that this sudden eruption of State regulation is an honest attempt to bridge the wide gulf which, as Lord Leverhulme points out in the "Sunday Times," "the immensity of modern industrial operations" has made between capital and labour. How is it, by the way, that Lord Leverhulme has escaped the insatiable embraces of the Prime Minister? He strikes us as being a captain of industry who has made not only his own fortune, but those of his workpeople, and who has studied with penetrating and humane glance the relations between capital and labour. Moreover, he is endowed with a power of expression extremely rare in a man of practice. In the crowd of captives, male and female, who adorn the Prime Minister's chariot, Lord Leverhulme would have been a notable figure. Perhaps Sir Alfred Mond kept him away. We do not know: we can only congratulate him on his escape. Lord Leverhulme points out that machinery and the size of modern combinations render the old personal relations

between employers and employed impossible. Carlyle never tired of denouncing a society in which cash was the sole nexus between man and man. Ruskin lamented in melodious periods the days when the workman was an artist taking a pride in his achievement. But when the workman is a machine-minder, and the employer is a board of directors in London, production becomes a purely commercial and impersonal affair, in which each party tries to get the better of the other. How this clash of economic forces may be so regulated as not to injure the State is the supreme problem of the hour, which will not be settled, in our judgment, by the multiplication of Government officials. Lord Leverhulme thinks it may be settled by a co-partnership between employers and employed. We have seen many systems which provided for a sharing of profits: we have not yet seen one which provides for a sharing of losses. When such a system is discovered over-government may cease.

#### AIRFARE AFTER THE WAR: PRESENT AND FUTURE PROBLEMS.

THE appointment of the Northcliffe Committee to investigate the question of aerial development for civil and commercial purposes is a great step forward in practical aviation. It is to be composed of representatives of the Board of Trade, Post Office, Colonial Office, Customs, Treasury, and the Overseas Dominions. And, briefly, they are expected to determine:

1. The steps which should be taken with a view to developing and regulating after the war aviation for civil and military purposes from the domestic, Imperial, and international standpoint; and

2. The extent to which it will be possible to utilise to the best advantage the trained personnel and the aircraft which the conclusion of peace may leave surplus to the requirements of the naval and military air services of the United Kingdom and the Overseas Dominions.

It is no novel idea, the adaptation of aviation to commercial purposes. Previous to the war it had been attempted successfully in Germany with a service of passenger-bearing Zeppelins. Commander Usborne, R.N.—since killed in carrying out an extremely difficult and plucky experiment in the air—had under consideration a scheme for a passenger service over Great Britain. This scheme had a financial backing of over £11,000,000! The commander estimated that the average cost of travel—allowing for all expenses—would be 1½d., and when further developed would be reduced to ¾d. per mile.

But airfare—the word, we believe, is original—of the future will depend on many widely conflicting factors. There is the geographical position of these islands to be considered. Westward lies the Atlantic Ocean; that will require many years of experimenting to span, at least in peace and comfort. On the North-East coasts the position is similar. There is a wide stretch of sea water to be traversed before touching the nearest point of land. This would indicate that when the first commercial system is established it will develop in a south and south-easterly direction. On the mainland of the Continent the craft will turn to left or right at will.

Climatic conditions will play no unimportant part. Of these elements wind affects flying most. It is a matter of the speed of the craft over the surface of the earth. The speedometer may register, let us say, eighty miles an hour maximum, but is influenced solely by the speed of the engine. Really, the speed of that machine might be ten miles over the ground—that is, it might be flying ten miles in a backward direction, because the head wind happened to be of a velocity of ninety miles, or ten more than the speed of the craft.

Fogs are dangerous. In a fog an airman loses all



sense of direction and proportion. Earth, sky, and all landmarks are obliterated. Rain is blinding to the eyes and affects the "lift" of the machine. Snow covers the surface of the earth with a treacherous regularity and renders the landing of an aeroplane dangerous. The dangers of night flying are too numerous to be tabulated in this short article, while inclement weather renders flying impossible.

Which will be the most useful of the three types of craft, aeroplane, seaplane, or airship, it is a difficult matter to decide. Thus far one is inclined to say the airship. The latter craft possesses the greatest lifting power, and "lift" is the most important factor in flying. The lift of an aeroplane is mechanically created; that of an airship both mechanical and natural, and therefore double in strength.

The greater the lifting power, the more powerful may be the engine, the greater the supply of petrol aboard, and the greater the radius of activity. However, the aeroplane is more airworthy, less cumbersome, less expensive, and more easily housed.

Referring to the construction of the craft, Major Baird, in the course of his speech, remarked: "There are now 958 firms engaged with work for the Director of Aeronautical Supplies—301 as direct contractors and 657 as sub-contractors, with a possible output of sixteen machines per month apiece". Taking this to be the average output, the yearly aggregate would be 57,792 machines. Also, taking into consideration the number of craft at present employed for military purposes—which number must be well in the tens of thousands—here is a very fair nucleus for an after-the-war commercial fleet.

But to develop aircraft solely for either military or commercial purposes would be madness. We must develop for both in proportion.

Apropos of this matter, there is little doubt that warfare of the future will be instantaneous. Within twelve hours of entering the conflict it will be decided one way or the other. In the air there can be no preliminary skirmishing, no long drawn-out battles, no falling back on a second line of defence or a strong natural position. And three phases of aerial combat must be considered, aeroplane versus aeroplane, airship versus aeroplane, and airship versus airship. The last form has yet to be seen.

As there have been different types of sea vessels for war and commerce in the past, so in the future there will be differing classes of aircraft. For a craft of war every frill is stripped away. She enters the combat like a battleship with her decks cleared. Every inch of space is required for powerful engines and spare petrol to give her the necessary speed and climbing power. The altitude at which she flies must be over twelve thousand feet, and great durative powers are unnecessary. On the other hand, the commercial aircraft will need greater powers of duration, a greater "lift", more space aboard, less climbing speed, and an altitude of between five and six thousand feet is only necessary.

It is impossible to construct an aeroplane possessing speed, duration, and climbing power alike. For the first, as the last, a powerful engine is required. This requires weight. Weight reduces "lift", and, necessarily, space aboard. Loss of space requires cutting down the supply of petrol, and this means loss of duration. An altitude of over five thousand feet must be maintained in case of engine failure, to give the pilot time to recover himself and pick out a suitable landing ground.

It is probable that the future fleets of the air will be composed rather of a number of vessels of uniform size than of a few vessels of enormous bulk. However much aircraft will be developed, there is always the matter of "lift" to be contended with, and thus the personnel and war accoutrements abroad will be limited.

With regard to the commercial aspect, one might well conceive in the near future an aerial line from, say, London to Capetown, via Paris, Bordeaux, Gib-

raltar, Fez, Lagos, Loango, and Johannesburg. Allowing an average speed of 110 miles per hour, with a satisfactory wind, and half an hour for each landing, an aeroplane leaving London at eight o'clock on a Monday morning would make the following timetable: London, 8 a.m. Monday, Paris, 10 a.m.; Bordeaux, 1 p.m.; Gibraltar, 8 p.m.; Fez, 9 p.m.; Lagos, 5.30 p.m. Tuesday, Loango, 2 a.m. Wednesday, Johannesburg, 8 p.m.; and Capetown, 4 a.m. Thursday. Total, London—Capetown, 3 days 20 hours.

At first glance the scheme may appear ludicrous. Likewise did the original idea of the motor-car to our grandfathers and of the aeroplane to our fathers.

#### THE BANDSTAND.

WE wonder if Peter Pan, our sole modern addition to mythology, ever strayed in his moonlit rambles as far as that lovely statue of Artemis with her drawn bow as she presides over the little sanctuary of flowers and fountain which Hellenises Hyde Park. Some have it that he did and was wounded by the goddess, jealous of his immortal boyhood. If so, depend upon it Apollo (in the shape of a constable) soon rushed to his rescue and re-enthroned him on his Serpentine pedestal. Artemis prided herself on her eternal youth, her enmity to giants (she slew Orion), and her fondness for runaway slaves. A short space northward may be found a shelter for us also—the worn slaves of strain and struggle—where no Titans molest, where tiny Peter Pans mutinous against gloves and nursemaids may frolic at will, where all may muse or be amused or dream or dally to the strains of "linked music long drawn out." The Park Bandstand, if we only knew it, is enchanted ground, and its airy music, stimulating or soothing, sheds a glamour like the spells of Lilliburlero or the "Marseillaise." The Kiosk bowered in trees, the vistas through their spaces, the golden haze of flickering sunbeams and dappled skies, the *fête champêtre* around of Demos and his artless court, the vivid sward chequered by sombre shadows, the scarlet performers whose faces are seldom visible—all these summon a microcosm of magic, a sense of mystery. In the gentle fall of the violet gloaming and the shy glimmer of little lights the illusion becomes complete. We are back once more in the fairyland of Pan, of Puck, of Shakespeare and Andersen, of Gainsborough and Watteau, of Haroun Alraschid. See, is that huge negro Mesrour, or is he an Othello of the boarding-house ogling and mesmerising his Desdemona?

But we will choose afternoon for our reverie, when we can see each other and note in what common disguises our fairies flit. None of us have wings. We laugh not, neither do we sing, we fays of modern London. We are all stolidly sitting on those green chairs, soldier, sailor, tinker, tailor, ploughboy, apothecary, thief, for Mercury, too, has a place in the Pantheon. We are all listening to one of those tunes dear to the British heart, in which stage sauciness and ballad sentiment trip, rather heavily, hand in hand. Many of us are smoking, some of us are pretending to read a newspaper, most of us are perforce glancing at the Paphian doves, those white-stockinged and white-shoed nymphs, "robed in white samite, mystic, wonderful," who flap or flutter past us till they, too, have found a perch—not far, you may be sure, from yonder big, good-humoured, imperturbable, impregnable Australians. A superficial silence prevails, despite the music. We might all of us be voyaging in some fabled boat while a somewhat decayed and curtly conversational Charon collects our obols. Can our fairyland, after all, be the pale realm of the spirit-shadows? On one side of us sits a dolorous dame in dingy black, with reticule and spectacles. She sits like grievance on a monument, and at first we take her for the bad fairy at the christening. But no, she is only our old friend, Mrs. Pipchin, fresh from her blighted indiarubber plants, and much beset in these

hard times to scrape a living. Her hand is weary of smacking small children, but even she relaxes her severe features into a gleam of "heavenly dis-pogicion" as she breaks her stertorous dose and nods to the tune. On the other side are two of those damsels who always run in couples. "No, my dear," archly exclaims the gayer, "I wouldn't let 'im. I would 'ave one taken alone. I insisted, I did." On which the admiring confidant ejaculates, "Lor, Marier!" This girl of iron will is evidently fresh from the cheap photographer, for whom times—such is human nature—are seldom hard. What her six words mean, of course, is clear, but when was love ever grammatical? In vain we (and she) scan the horizon for her compliant swain. He is probably being "taken alone" elsewhere with someone else. Not far from us sits, or rather flops, a mild, fat, flabby, and porous man with a fierce, weeping, tawny moustache. He looks like a pastrycook turned poet. Nothing stirs his adipose collapse. Is he some fairy prince transformed into a jelly-fish? Or has he only sought refuge on these banks of Lethe from a scolding wife? There is something sharp and shrill in the very sound, once wrote his co-martyr Sterne. Near him, again, solemnly gesticulating, is one of those explainers-in-ordinary always present at all assemblies. "It's like this, yer see," he keeps reiterating as he saws the air to the rhythm, "like this," and his friend as often caps him with a monotonous "Jest so." But what was like what, or why assent is inevitable, we shall never learn; it is thus that politics are manufactured by the newspapers. And into what will those elfish, piteous little mud-larrikins be transformed who have tramped all the way from the slums for a whiff of fresh air and dropped cigarette ends? For them the Serpentine is a fairy gutter, rife with surprises and cooling for shoeless feet. The policeman is their God who loves while he chastens, and the band seems one of his awe-inspiring miracles. Poor little seven-year-old 'Lizer is half-mothering three tinier sparrows and stands with open mouth so Gorgonised by the Medusa music that she nearly drops one of them. An urchin—"non Anglus sed Diabolus"—is dragging a broken bottle. Let us hope that out of that bottle the geni will arise and transform him, if not into Fortunatus, at any rate into a happy, independent human being.

Ranged in a sparse row, attenuatedly attentive to the band, is another pathetic spectacle—the carriages of the so-called rich, who should always be distinguished from the Ritz. The majority are concealed in broughams, and we may wonder if some of those closed windows really hide the comparative tatters (as the proud Italian chariots used to do) of reduced gentility. The strip of road outside the bandstand is in truth a harbourage for horses, and it is pleasant, though painful, to see the remnant of these human animals at anchor. In the Victorian barouches sit smart wounded soldiers. One of them is genially fraternising with the cockaded coachman, while within gracious ladies are brightening the lives of grateful heroes. Do you think that any of these will ever again be deluded by the Limehouse cant of class proscription? A few are meagrely driving up and down like ghosts of the glory that in the seasons of the 'seventies would manœuvre four deep daily across the Row. Most of their occupants are in mourning far deeper than once were the ranks of that vanished splendour. Ah, Ichabod! Motors and tubes, the Mob and the Millionaire—that is to say "Democracy"—have replaced them. But there are humours even now that costers' donkey carts are admissible—perhaps the more so because of them. An energetic young Amazon who fears not "bobbies" neither regards man still drives a pair of spanking (if rationed) ponies. That querulous, invalid dowager and her legacy-catching companion, that spruce old sportsman who seems ordering the sun to stand still on Gibeon—these are as old as "Vanity Fair." And there is actually a misogynist, driving alone and impenitent.

At the further end of the band amphitheatre, the side fronting the Serpentine, stand two of those emerald chairs which for us have sad and sacred memories. They are not the same seats, but they occupy the same spot where ten years ago—how short, how long!—in another world, a father sat with his schoolboy son. He was up for the holidays, a word that has almost lost its meaning. The family had already sped from the sweltering town for their summer exodus. Only they and the dear old butler friend lingered. The son was full of hope and happiness. He and his father who had waited for him had finished their last round of heated shopping. They sat there with their parcels and heard the music, an overture to the next day's journey. No blither couple ever heard that orchestra, and now those mute chairs seem haunted. The brave, gifted, gallant boy sleeps in a nameless grave near Ypres, outside the ditch which he and the company which his mirth inspired defended to the death. Even as he died he laughed: "The laughing hero wins the day."

"Haply where now thy grave is green,  
Cities of dreamland shall be built,  
Strongholds majestic, bright, serene,  
Defying want and care and guilt.  
And thou, with each that woos like thee  
Stern, sacrificial loveliness  
Are founders, and already see  
That glory ere it dawns to bless;  
Thrill at its thrilling, lead aright  
Dim sons of shadow to the light."

"God Save the King" sounds forth at last. All rise responsive, for no red flag profanes the bandstand. Every man doffs his hat—and the charwoman by mistake her deer-stalker. Slowly the crowd disperses, and reverie is at an end. But there is one thing lacking: it is a great lack in our social life. Why is there not a little restaurant in the near neighbourhood where tired workers could dine or sup to the strains of the band? Why is there no little café chantant hard by? People are always much better behaved when amusement is public and sociable. And the pseudo-Puritans would be routed. There is an old English rhyme that fits them thoroughly:

"I went to Banbury, O profane one,  
And there I found a Puritane one  
A-hanging cats upon a Monday  
For killing mice upon a Sunday."

"They order these things better [said Sterne] in France."

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### CURRENCY INFLATION.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Professor Shield Nicholson's recent address to the Statistical Society merits more than a passing notice. In selecting for his subject the "Statistical Aspects of Inflation" Professor Nicholson approached a question which is of the highest importance at the present time, and it is unfortunate that he should have so dealt with it as to vitiate, if not destroy, the value of his conclusions. The rise in prices both of wages and commodities is attracting universal attention. Some are making money out of the situation and are content. Many, and those chiefly who are least able to bear the strain, are seriously inconvenienced. Numbers are furiously angry and are expressing themselves strongly and in the main ignorantly. There is thus the utmost need of the fullest information and advice, and for that we look to professional economists such as Professor Nicholson. Let us see how he deals with the subject and the conclusions he draws. He points to Tooke's investigation of the conditions which prevailed in the Napoleonic war period. Tooke's method was to appeal to facts and to endeavour to decide the validity and relative importance of the causes assigned. Professor Nichol-



son follows, or professes to follow, the same method. He defines his object as being to outline some of the statistical aspects of inflation. He does not, he tells us, propose to illustrate or prove preconceived theories. It is precisely here that he diverges from the true line of investigation. To consider only "some" of the statistical aspects of inflation is to weaken fatally his conclusions, and by leaving the main facts and considerations out of sight render them weak and indeterminate. He begins by comparing all the increases of the different forms of currency in this country in the period of the war with such pre-war periods as may be supposed to give the normal increases. In this way he discusses the making of postal orders legal tender, the issues of silver and bronze coinage, the movements of gold coin, the issues of Treasury notes, the circulation of cheques as shown in the Clearing House returns, and the variations in the amount of the Bank deposits. The results, he points out, in the several cases show an uneven rate of expansion. Many useful tables are given to illustrate the argument, but it is startling to find that he limits his inquiry to the figures applicable to the United Kingdom. Now, if there is one thing more clear than another in connection with the rise in the prices of commodities and wages it is that the movements are world movements. The figures for the United Kingdom are valuable in themselves, but their effect cannot possibly be claimed to be more than a contributory cause in the general increase of prices which admittedly has taken place the world over. There is no reference in Professor Nicholson's address to the similar movements which have taken place elsewhere abroad except to what Professor Nicholson describes as the relative stability in prices in the United States. This statement does not appear to fit in with the facts; but, even if it did, it would only be one item in many movements all operative and not in themselves conclusive. Let us take, for instance, inflation of currency in the case of bank notes in France, Germany, and Russia. The issue of notes in France has increased during the war from £267,327,000 to £791,117,000. The coin in the Bank of France has increased from £190,667,000 to £221,747,000. This shows a fall in the ratio of coin held to notes issued from 71·3 per cent. to 28·0 per cent. In the case of Germany the figures are: Notes increased from £94,545,000 to £411,201,000; coin increased from £84,570,000 to £129,159,000; ratio of gold to notes reduced from 89·4 per cent. to 31·4 per cent. In Russia we have: Notes increased from £163,411,000 to £1,218,570,000; coin increased from £181,892,000 to £371,933,000; and ratio reduced from 111·3 per cent. to 30·5 per cent. The figures are for mid-June 1917. In the case of Germany we know that immense amounts of subsidiary notes have been issued which are not included in the above figures. Throughout Europe there has been a considerable movement on similar lines. Now, if there is any virtue in the contention upon which Professor Nicholson largely bases his conclusions, surely these are clearly contributory factors and cannot be ignored. They settle nothing, any more than Professor Nicholson's facts do, but are important when we are dealing with world-wide movements, as in the present case.

There are, however, other considerations and influences which inevitably fall to be considered, but to which no serious consideration is given in Professor Nicholson's address. Chief amongst these are deficiency in supply and transport and the absorption of labour owing to the war. It is a good economic doctrine that a deficiency in the supply of any commodity is commonly attended with an advance in price beyond the degree of the deficiency. The converse is also true when there is a surplus of supply. This is a doctrine which is more especially true regarding corn, but has a general application. Now, harvests are notoriously short at present. Here is a cause of rise in prices which certainly requires recognition and examination. Professor Nicholson ignores it and yet

thinks it necessary to give full statistics of the temporary use at the beginning of the war of postal orders as legal tender, whereas in a few months the value of these in the hands of the public had once again become normal, and the effect, if any, of their temporarily increased circulation must have disappeared. Similar remarks may be applied to deficiency of transport. Here is a most potent cause of increased prices. Not only are freights abnormally high, but many commodities are held up in such a manner that their free use is for practical purposes suspended.

Professor Nicholson tells us nothing whatever about these things, nor does he remark at all upon the dislocation of labour owing to the withdrawal of men for the various fronts, the impossibility of replacing them except in part by women, and the consequent enhancement of production cost in every direction. To come now to Professor Nicholson's conclusions. The broad results, he says, may be stated in the simplest form. Summarised, his conclusions, based, be it remembered, wholly on United Kingdom figures, are: There has been an abnormal increase in the various forms of currency. There has been an abnormal rise in prices of commodities and money wages. The rise in prices during the first two years of the war lagged behind the increase in currency. The root cause of the inflation of currency has been the great expansion of Government credit, and, finally, if the inflation of currency continues the rise in prices will also continue. This last is the rock on which Professor Nicholson splits. All the other statements of results may be admitted to be fairly well based, in view of the facts and figures which he cites, but it is certainly clear that the final conclusion does not follow from the premises. It is a case of generalising from insufficient data. Not that inflation of currency and rise of prices have no connection; far from it. But it cannot be admitted that, because a certain inflation has taken place in Great Britain, and prices have risen there, consequently the two things stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect. You cannot treat the United Kingdom for such an inquiry as a watertight compartment. You are bound, if your conclusion is to stand, to deal with the question as a world problem, as it undoubtedly is. You must take a broad view, not a view based upon facts applicable to a limited area alone. Possibly, if statistics for the world could be compiled the conclusion to be drawn from them would be the same. There would still, however, remain the deeper question of how far the inflation of the currency has been the effect, and not the cause, of these prices movements. This is, however, a question into which it will be too early to inquire until we have the necessary world data to guide us.

I am,

Yours obediently,

F. FAITHFULL BEGG.

#### THE FRENCH CANADIANS AND THE WAR.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—To allow Mr. Clément's statements to pass for facts in the eyes of your readers unversed in Canadian affairs would be deplorable. I am not a Canadian, but an Englishman associated with the Dominion for five and forty years, and familiar with it and its history from ocean to ocean. That "French Canadians have enlisted in proportion to other races" is a grotesque and foolish assertion, and the numbers published the other day—14,800 against over 400,000 English-speaking Canadians—is sufficient answer, the proportions of population being roughly two millions as against five. Comment is needless. The French Canadians are the only race in the world with a double obligation of two "mother countries," as it were, struggling for their lives. Conscription, qua such, is in a measure a technical and reasonably contentious question in an oversea Dominion. It is the miserable recruiting figures of the French Canadians that are such an amazing

spectacle in this case, and eloquent of the *true* opposition to conscription.

To quote a few supposed snubs and hitches as accountable for such an utter moral failure in this critical and gigantic business is to give the whole case away and display the pettiness and poverty of the defence.

"Prussianising" French Canadians means refusing to grant Government money for French educational methods in the *British* Provinces where the French are scattered in relatively trifling numbers. The great French Province of Quebec rules itself absolutely, with and mainly by its established ultramontane Church. One would think, too, that such a passion for "French culture" would give a thought to its motherland fighting really for her life. Over one and a half million French Quebecers have produced under 7,000 enlisted men! The rest apparently come from all over Canada, largely, I believe, from the mixed French and English lumber camps.

It is quite true that up to the present French-Canadian priests have been loyal to the connection. They would have been lunatics to be anything else. No alien race and religion has ever been treated with such consistent generosity by a conquering Power. The U.S. would have given their language and religion short shrift. Our generous treatment of Canada in 1763-71 was one of the indictments framed against England by the American Colonies in 1775.

Lastly, the hardy fiction that the French "saved Canada for England." I happen, for the best of reasons, to know intimately every detail of the two wars in question. When the American rebels attacked Canada in 1775-76 practically the entire French Militia, as everybody knows, refused to fight, and several hundred joined the Americans. They would listen neither to their priests (for once) nor their seigneurs. When Guy Carleton threw himself into Quebec, the only point of defence left, with a handful of Regulars, a few hundred French citizens united with a similar number of British volunteers in the successful defence of the city. This body helped the British to save Canada against the ungrateful defalcation of *their own race*. For if the numerous Militia, then fairly martial, had done their duty, the American invaders would have been overwhelmed in no time by sheer numbers.

In the war of 1812-15 British Regulars and United Empire loyalist Militia did nearly the whole of the very severe fighting, for the simple reason that the Upper or British Province (Ontario) was the main point of attack and seat of war. It is quite true that the French remained loyal and such Militia as was mustered for active or garrison work did its duty. It is also true that if the French population had risen we could not have held the country. But these negative contributions to British rule do not justify by a long way the statement that the French "saved Canada for England." Moreover, what was their alternative?—the intolerant New England Puritan!

One deeply and sincerely sympathises with the small minority of patriotic and right-thinking French Canadians in what must be a most intolerable position. Nothing, however, could better justify the British Canadians' rooted opinion that the mass of their French neighbours are a benighted and side-tracked people than their almost insupportable attitude towards this world war—anti-conscription is the mere sequel to non-enlistment.

Yours, etc.,

A. G. B.

#### "A FROLIC OF BUREAUCRACY."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

54, Curzon Street, W.,

25 July 1917.

SIR,—The powers employed by Bureaucratic Government create some strange situations. One of these is that anyone owning a piece, or pieces, of grass land, as everyone likes to do, round his house and garden, and whatever his calling or business, or wherever his duties may call him, is liable to be ordered at a few weeks' notice to take up the trade of a farmer and to break up his paddocks and

grow wheat. If this land is let, he must cancel the contract and lose the rent, even if it is that of the whole year. If it is mortgaged and the mortgagee objects to arable land instead of pasture as his security, that must not interfere; he must pay the mortgagee off if he can. If he is short of money—and many are in these times of stress—and has none to invest in farming, that also must not stand in the way; he must find it somehow. Otherwise the Department may step in and cut up his property before his eyes. That is what is called the attitude of the Board of Agriculture towards the landowner, or, from cases in point, may be taken to be the powers that are claimed. On the other hand, there are other Departments of the State who adjure the subject to be economical, to save his money—which he needs to pay the burdensome taxes—to put what surplus he can collect into the various War Loans and so help on the war; in short, to adopt rather the part of the miser in order that he may place his savings at the disposal of the State. In contradistinction to this adjuration, the Board of Agriculture summons him to become a prodigal, to throw his rent away and the value of his land, and to spend his money; or, if he has it not, to borrow it in order to squander his substance in gambling in wheat growing, a speculative enterprise which should only be undertaken by the expert. If he has not the money and cannot borrow, no suggestion is made. The ordinary banker would probably not be willing to provide it. In all, £15,000,000 new capital is said to be required to satisfy this wheat-growing order. Possibly Lord Faringdon's Trade Corporation may be prepared to provide capital on easy terms to the landowner to enable him to comply with the ukase launched against him; if so, it would be an additional and patriotic reason why we should welcome the birth of that institution, if it were going to share in the effort and the risk of corn production. Otherwise it may be that the greed of the exercise of too much power may render abortive the purpose for which it was conferred. In any case, it would seem that even a Bureaucratic Government should give the landowner the option of investing in War Loans, which is held to be the most superlatively patriotic thing to do, rather than to risk his money in the speculative enterprise of producing corn; and we may affirm with warmth that it is even more patriotic for a landowner to grow a sure crop of beef, mutton, milk, butter, cheese and wool, and of the animals in all their stages that produce these, than to experiment in the more precarious production of cereals, if that is not the trade of himself or his land.

The difficulty, besides the certain loss in the conversion of land properly equipped for grazing into arable, is not only that of labour, but of capital; the national interest surely insistently demands that, in times when so much is required from it, the land should be kept not only in a state of efficiency but of solvency. The tendency is to lose sight of the importance of this.

There is every indication that it is money rather than food that will win or lose the war for us, and I submit that the most patriotic citizen is he who conserves and does not dissipate his resources, as, if he is a landowner, he is invited to do.

In the days of crisis, criticism—if founded on long experience—is not only justifiable, but may be nationally useful.

Your obedient servant,

J. F. L. ROLLESTON.

WINDSOR.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—The new title adopted by the King suggests to me a few details of the word not, perhaps, generally known.

Windsor figures in Domesday Book and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. But even so, the learned philologist would doubt if the King has escaped Teutonic associations. Windsor is, says Skeat, the shore of Wændel, which is the same as Vandal.

The name, so far as we remember, has not been besmirched by fiction. Mr. Windsor, in "The Fortunes of



Nigel," was an elderly clergyman, "a decent, venerable man," who read evening prayers for George Heriot.

Yours sincerely,  
STUDENT.

#### LITERARY CRITICISM.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

21 July 1917.

SIR,—The end of a week's hard work, which is welcome in itself, is made doubly acceptable by the arrival of two copies of the SATURDAY REVIEW, one of which goes on to France and the other to Mesopotamia.

This week in particular I have to thank you for your review of Mr. Arnold Bennett's book, in which many of my most cherished opinions are expressed in a way that makes me wish to fall upon your reviewer's (literary) neck and embrace him. Like Gilbert's Ferdinando, "I've always been distinguished for a fine poetic feeling," but my heterodox distaste for the works of George Meredith and in a less degree for those of Henry James has made me fear that I might be a Philistine, more especially as I am so low as to be a fervent admirer of Trollope at his best. Not only did the latter draw lively and truthful pictures of clerics and lawyers, but he made all his characters live, and his delineation of mental abnormality, in such cases as those of Mr. Crawley of Hoggstock and of the hero in "He knew He was Right," is masterly and has earned the highest praise from experts in mental disease.

One question is suggested to me by your reviewer's reference to the egregious Winston. Would it be possible in any career other than that of politics for a man to continue to hold any position of trust or responsibility after displaying such a plentiful lack of judgment and sense of proportion as he did in the Sydney Street business?

On that occasion he sent two Horse Artillery guns and a company of the Guards to capture or destroy two desperadoes, who had shut themselves up in a house in a densely peopled part of London. And this was done by one who had been a professional soldier and had seen some service. As evidence of an unbalanced mind it should have been enough to drive and keep him out of office for ever.

As to "Lord Bacon." It is, as I think, unkind of your correspondent to seek to destroy the feeling of superiority which those of us feel who are better informed than Pepys, Bolingbroke, Burke, Macaulay, and other ignoramuses.

What about "Lord North"? I have no books of reference at hand and therefore no excuse for trespassing further on your patience.

Yours gratefully,  
GATH.

#### "LORD BACON."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

82, Earls Road, Southampton.

SIR,—Shelley was among the persons of bad taste who would identify "Bacon" with the Peerage.

In his essay, "A Defence of Poetry," published in 1821, Shelley wrote the following words, between two full-stops: "Lord Bacon was a poet."

Let us be thankful that Shelley did not say "the poet," thus making Shakespeare's position more shaky than it is.

Yours faithfully,  
THOMAS CARR.

#### BREAD IN ITALY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—It is reported that in Italy it has been found that if wheat, unground and in a pure state, be soaked in water for two days, it then is in a state to be kneaded and made into bread. By this means it would appear the best wholemeal bread can be attained.

Perhaps the idea may be of interest to the Food Controller or "Lens" might consider it scientifically?

Your obedient servant,  
F. C. CONSTABLE.

#### REVIEWS.

"My Reminiscences." By Sir Rabindranath Tagore. With Illustrations. Macmillan. 7s. 6d. net.

NOT so long since the name of Tagore raised no emotions among English readers, whose interest in India has always been scanty, and though there were Tagores in "Who's Who," the prose-poet of these "Reminiscences" had yet to make the reputation recently enhanced by his knighthood. "The whirligig of time brings in his revenges," as the Clown said in "Twelfth Night": the natives of India whose unconscious distortions of our language were a favourite source of humour now supply one of the most admired literary figures of the day. The mystical philosophy of India has become fashionable, and those who do not understand it can yet admire a style which in its wealth of elevated imagery reminds them of "The Song of Solomon" or the illustrious soul-weariness of "Ecclesiastes." We should not expect the "Reminiscences" of Sir Rabindranath Tagore to be ordinary—a *réchauffé* in the manner so popular and lucrative to-day of people he has met and jokes he has made or borrowed—and we have found them decidedly interesting in what they say and what they omit. The omissions may be a cause for surprise and irritation to those who know little of the author. After explaining that his reminiscences are "literary material" and "memory pictures" rather than an autobiography, he begins his story with "We three boys were being brought up together." We find nothing here about his father or his mother or his notable family, and only fragmentary information elsewhere. They remain for the reader of this book indistinct in their daily habit, apart from a brother with whom the author lived to his great advantage. Nothing, further, is said of the school which he founded at the age of forty, and which has occupied much of his time and energy.

The volume is, in fact, the history of a mind which seems to us excessively self-centred in introspection. Physically and mentally gifted beyond his fellows, the young "Rabi" ran a grave risk, in spite of his repugnance to teachers and wayward disposition, of becoming a prig and by no means an agreeable one. But he had a wise father, and possesses a sense of humour which enables him to look back on his lost youth in a spirit of irony and recognise the quality of the frothy outpourings which the immature value as their first bantlings. This book stops at fifty, and, considering that it is always concerned with the development of the author's own mind, is fairly successful in avoiding the monotony of egoism. The setting, for one thing, will be novel to many readers, and we think the translator might have added to the explanatory notes. The renaissance among the little band of Bengali thinkers, poets, and musicians makes good reading, and the author paid two visits to England which, like Heine, he found infinitely cold and dreary. But he pays a real tribute to the English kindness and gift for trusting foreigners. In one family he found an ideal home and was treated as a son, which was more than a compensation for the silly woman who made a show of him as a foreign singer. Why precisely his possible career at the Bar was stopped he does not explain. Some providential hitch appears to have intervened, and he got the best chances of developing his powers in India. His mastery of the English language came late, and what he says of the authors presented as models to Bengali students is worth reflecting on:

"Atheism was the dominant note of the English prose writings then in vogue, Bentham, Mill, and Comte being favourite authors. Theirs was the reasoning in terms of which our youths argued. The age of Mill constitutes a natural epoch in English history. It represents a healthy reaction of the body politic, these destructive forces having been brought in temporarily to rid it of accumulated thought rubbish. In our country we received these in the

letter, but never sought to make practical use of them, employing them only as a stimulant to incite ourselves to moral revolt. Atheism was thus for us a mere intoxication."

Seldom is youth original, and the excesses of these young days, if they had been known, would hardly have made Viceroy's tremble for the future of the British in India. With a scanty literature of rivals dead and living the young enthusiast had a means of making himself without political unrest, and he was more pleased, we are sure, with his imitations of an ancient lyricist which duly figured as genuine in a German thesis for the doctorate. The breeze that ruffled his little world was little beyond a murmur, and wild English things had to be made still wilder because there was really so little behind them. This reflection leads the author to the verdict that, "In English literature the reticence of true art has not yet appeared. . . . Human emotion is only one of the ingredients of literature, and not its end—which is the beauty of perfect fullness, consisting in simplicity and restraint. This is a proposition which English literature does not yet fully admit."

It is a proposition, we may add, which shows the limitations of Sir Rabindranath Tagore. The kind of ideal which he has set before himself is not the only one in literature. Preferences are well enough, but should not imply a whole list of exclusions. We can find room among the immortals for the impetuosity of passion as well as the reticence of the restrained artist. We can read "Wuthering Heights" as well as "Emma." In the same way we doubt if the author is fair in the differences he discovers between the music of the East and the West. In Europe he found performers more accomplished in detail than his native singers, but he seems to suggest that minor external defects serve better to set off the internal perfection of a composition. He does not find that our melodies transcend the barriers of everyday life. We can assure him that they do for us, though we may freely admit that our modern concert-goers are apt to think more of the singer than the song.

Throughout the book are scattered many sound and discerning *obiter dicta*. "As acidity is characteristic of the unripe mango, so is abuse of the immature critic." "The temptation to become famous in the eyes of one's mother is as difficult to resist as such fame is easy to earn." "To leave out all poetry which has not attained definiteness would not bring us to the truth of literature."

The author has wisely suppressed much of his immature work, and expresses his horror at the idea of its being dug out some day. Seeing what has been done with Tennyson, he may well tremble. Only towards the end of the book, after he has emancipated himself and begun to write what he pleases, does he come to that mystical revelation which lifts the cover of triviality from the everyday world and suppresses the ever imminent sense of self. To some the pages describing this experience will seem idle, mere dreams from the ivory gate; to others they will be the most significant in the book.

Here we have the reflections of a sensitive, self-centred, retiring life to which the outer world meant little. At the end the author writes: "My life's journey has now to be completed through the dwelling-places of men," and the translator speaks of his recent tour to Japan and America. What does he make of a world of men and women widely different from his own, children who are grown up, yet often childishly ignorant? Will the rhapsodist of beauty and lofty ideas be modified by the vast crowd of materialists? Perhaps he will tell us some day. To too many artists the real life is the life they do not lead, and they are not strong enough to combat the narrow irreverence which they meet at every street corner.

#### LA DAME DE BON SECOURS.

"Madame Adam." By Winifred Stephens. Chapman & Hall. 10s. 6d. net.

IN 1886 Madame Adam said to Skobelev, "I am ever holding myself ready for the holy war of the Gauls and the Latins against the Teutons." At that time the possibility of La Revanche was cherished by only a few French idealists, who, if in a sense admired, were also jeered at by their more practical fellow-countrymen. There is something uplifting in the thought that the delightful, warm-hearted, brilliant Frenchwoman whom a vast circle belonging to every class and condition long ago christened "La Dame de bon Secours" should have lived to see the downfall of Germany. Seldom indeed does Providence allow such a stroke of poetic justice.

There is one gift which is rarely given to any woman who is or who can be described as having been *adornably belle*. That gift is the gift of friendship—selfless, kindly, helpful friendship—perhaps the most valuable human asset an eager-natured, enthusiastic, ambitious man or woman can possess. During Juliette Adam's long life it had not been so much the number as the variety of her friendships which arouses astonishment. She has been on terms of affection and trustful intimacy with men as utterly different the one from the other as were Skobelev, the Count von Beust, de Lesseps, the Duc d'Aumale, Jules Ferry, Mérimée, and last, not least, Gambetta, whom she may be said to have formed into the considerable statesman he ultimately became.

In some ways, apart from certain obvious differences, the first half of Madame Adam's life curiously resembles that of her beloved foster-mother and friend, George Sand. Like George Sand, she was in early youth the victim of a most unhappy arranged marriage; and, like George Sand again, she came up to Paris with her child, and, dropping her married name, determined to earn her living by her writing. In those far-away days—in the 'fifties, as a matter of fact—a fortune-teller told the then quite unknown Juliette Lamber that she would become famous through writing a book in answer to another book. This prediction came true with "Idées Anti-Proudhoniennes," an answer to the then fashionable writer Proudhon's coarse attack on George Sand and Daniel Stern. The latter—that strange, stormy petrel of love and letters who in private life was the Comtesse d'Agoult—immediately sought out her young defender, and it was in the Comtesse d'Agoult's famous *salon* that the future Madame Adam met, among others, Lamartine, Béranger, Wagner, and, oddly enough, Bismarck, as also the group of remarkable Frenchmen then known as the "Abstentionists" because they refused to take the oath of allegiance to Napoleon III. Among the Abstentionists were Grévy, Carnot, Girardin, and with them was the then less known Edmond Adam, a bachelor, and incidentally a successful banker. At that time Edmond Adam was private secretary to Thiers, and though he had none of the brilliant wit and showy cleverness which distinguished so many of his contemporaries, he was, as Madame Adam is proud of saying, a perfectly honest man. Their marriage, which followed soon on the death of her first husband, was extraordinarily happy.

There still exists to-day a curious and attractive painting of Daniel Stern's *salon*. In the centre sit the hostess and her beautiful young friend, and about the two feminine figures are grouped twelve of the men who made the Revolution of '48.

Daniel Stern and George Sand had already had their celebrated quarrel, and so George Sand refused to meet Juliette Lamber. But the day came when Juliette in her turn quarrelled with the Comtesse d'Agoult, and at once she became almost as an adopted daughter to the then ageing George Sand. Among her treasures is one at which many English eyes would fain cast an affectionate glance—it is a



faded photograph inscribed in George Sand's fine, firm handwriting, "A ma Juliette," of the little marshy pond which was the scene of "La Mare au Diable."

Many people who know nothing else of Madame Adam are vaguely aware of how great a rôle she played in the career of Léon Gambetta. In an account given to the present writer by one who was present at their first meeting Gambetta is described as having appeared at Madame Adam's *diner de gala* in a check flannel shirt on which were pinned a white collar and cuffs and a short pilot coat! Miss Stephens tells how the hostess, with that mixture of good breeding and good feeling which distinguishes her, at once made him her guest of honour. The young man from the south soon conquered his host and hostess, and when, on the death of Berryer, Gambetta stood as Republican candidate for Marseilles, the Adams helped him to fight the election and greatly contributed to his victory. Later, after '70, it was greatly owing to their united efforts that the only thing Gambetta's countrymen remembered about him was the way he had organised if not victory then defeat, and saved the honour of France.

It was Madame Adam who first suggested and later engineered her country's alliance with Russia. Gambetta was never sympathetic to this project—more, there came a moment, tragically painful to his political godmother, when he seemed fascinated by the personality of Bismarck. Their friendship waned, and not long before the curious, mysterious accident which caused his death she allowed an attack against his policy to be published in the *Nouvelle Revue*, founded and edited by herself. When Gambetta was dying he was heard to murmur, "It hurts!" "Your wound?" asked a friend solicitously. "No, not my wound. Madame Adam's article."

But though *La Nouvelle Revue* has always been primarily a political publication, its claim to ultimate fame will surely rest on the fact that during Madame Adam's editorship there were published in its pages the first writings of Pierre Loti, of Paul Bourget, and of Marcelle Tinayre. "Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard" also first appeared in the *Revue*.

And now? Now Madame Adam, in her eighty-first year, is still vigorous, still beautiful, with the beauty of dignified, beneficent old age, positively enjoying "cet âge heureux, où l'on n'est plus qu'amie, mère, et grand'mère." She is absorbed in war work and initiated the first considerable effort to cope with the piteous problem of the permanently disabled.

The awful conflict which has brought such heavy grief to so many has not spared Madame Adam. Her favourite grandson was killed at the battle of the Marne, but, to quote the last sentence of Miss Stephens's most understanding and sympathetic biography, "She is convinced that ultimate triumph cannot long be delayed. '1917?' exclaims la grand Française, '71 reversed! That blessed date rings like the joy bells of victory in my old veteran's ears.'"

#### SOLDIER STORIES.

"Soldier Men." By Yeo. Lane. 3s. 6d. net.

"Letters of a Soldier." With an Introduction by A. Clutton-Brock and a Preface by André Chevrillon. Authorised translation from the French by V. M. Constable. 4s. 6d. net.

IN previous wars the fountain pens of special correspondents have gushed with the regularity we expect from the London water companies. Now the professionals are reduced to a minimum, and the better educated part of our Armies has produced a mass of writing concerning things seen and endured. Competition among the publishers has somewhat overdone these narratives at first hand. They are not so bad as the books about atrocities, but any competent reviewer will find it advisable to make a rigorous selection of them. Guide-book matter, sloppy sentiment, and the

sort of exaggeration that flourishes on the music-halls, descriptions of desolation and smiling summer—these things grow tedious to an ungrateful public which seeks for some novelty.

"Yeo" has the advantage of an Oriental setting for his sketches; he has been admitted to the select circle of "Punch," and, what is more important to the critic, he has a sound idea of writing. He makes good play with ragged and insinuating Bedouins, and his comic sketches are amusing, though we wonder if the whole of our Army talks Cockney. If this has really happened by contamination, it is a linguistic phenomenon to be deplored. Does the Tommy say "Laugh!" with derisive scorn after producing his sarcasm? We like the instructor who bores men to death with his oxygenating exercises. The achievement of the book, however, is the study of a young officer's feelings when he is waiting for the real thing, the relief mingled with self-scorn and disappointment when he is ordered back from the fighting line, the tedium of doing nothing, and the revelation of shooting to kill and seeing one's own men killed, which is not much of a revelation after all. The author is evidently interested, as all thinking men are, in the psychology of courage. No man can dogmatise about it, and no normal Englishman likes to talk about it unless you can catch him under the stress of some great emotion. The race has grown even more secretive than it was about intimate feelings. No boy, for instance, talks of religion as they did in Tom Brown's day.

Mr. Clutton-Brock always writes well, but it seems rather a naïve proceeding to explain at this time of day the differences between the French and the English temperament. If the public has not learnt them, it is not for want of explanation. One feature of "Letters of a Soldier" is his adoration of his mother, but this has been a notable feature in the letters of several young English soldiers of ability. He is, perhaps, typically French in his powers of artistic vision; but he is neither French nor English in the most striking side of his book. He belongs to the rare order of philosophers who can reach serenity in a world of horrors. M. Chevrillon credits him with the stoicism of Marcus Aurelius, but in his joy of life and feeling for beauty he has what Marcus lacked. Sometimes the weary flesh is too much for him, but for the most part his intensity of feeling holds him up and endows him at twenty-eight with a vision which sees the good stirring everywhere in humanity. The letters have hardly any details of places, though the scenery of the Meuse brings out the painter's ecstasy; they show a vague faith which couples Socrates with the Christian martyrs and the men of the Revolution; but the writer in his brief experience of war had achieved a steady courage and understanding beyond most men. He had got beyond the idea of personal success: "To a child in a game it is a fine thing to carry the flag; but for a man it is enough to know that the flag will yet be carried. And that is what every moment of great august Nature brings home to me. Every moment reassures my heart: Nature makes flags out of everything. They are more beautiful than those to which one's little habits cling. And there will always be eyes to see and cherish the lessons of earth and sky."

That is true, but these lessons do not teach everyone that "two crosses are less heavy to carry than one," or lead a man whose habits of thought are broken in the terror-zone of laceration and murder to discover "more glimpses than ever before of eternal beauty and order."

This is the most remarkable book of its kind we have seen lately. It brings philosophy, which seemed an arid science in the hands of modern word-splitters, into actual touch with life.

## LATEST BOOKS.

"Shell Shock and its Lessons." By G. Elliot Smith and T. H. Pear. Manchester: University Press. London: Longmans. 2s. 6d. net.

This brief book is described by the authors as a "simple non-technical exposition of the ascertained facts of that malady, or complex of maladies, for which we have adopted the official designation 'Shell-shock'". It should be very useful not only for those who have to deal with cases of nervous breakdown, but also in relieving the minds of those who exaggerate and misunderstand the meaning of the symptoms involved. Though the book inevitably involves some knowledge of psychology, it is clearly written, and popular enough to refer to Sherlock Holmes, Bernard Shaw, and the author of "Erewhon". The war has brought the subject forward as one of great importance, and the authors rely on data which came from France, Russia, and Germany, as well as our own Army, and which fortify their own experiences and conclusions. They end with a striking chapter on the need for reform of the British attitude towards the treatment of mental disorder.

A man sent back home with "shock" is commonly said to have "lost his reason" or "lost his senses". This is a misconception the authors combat vigorously, and it does great harm when the patient himself thinks himself on the way to madness because he shows certain symptoms he has been taught to associate with madmen. The abnormal conditions are "characterised by instability and exaggeration of emotion, rather than by ineffective or impaired reason". The emotions, too, when they are once let loose, may be the more disturbing because they have been previously kept in check by great efforts.

The various means of treatment are lucidly described, and the moral objections to psychological analysis are fairly considered. The corrections throughout the book of the casual views and suppositions of the public on mental cases of difficulty deserve a wide circulation.

"Lord Jim: A Tale." By Joseph Conrad. Dent. 5s. net.

"Lord Jim," which first appeared during the literary renaissance of the 'nineties, is very welcome in a well-printed new edition which has the added interest of a new "Author's Note". Mr. Conrad meets the obvious criticism of the setting of his story, that of a long narrative told to listeners, by the remark: "Men have been known, both in the tropics and in the temperate zone, to sit up half the night 'swapping yarns'. This, however, is but one yarn, yet with interruptions affording some measure of relief; and in regard to the listeners' endurance, the postulate must be accepted that the story *was* interesting".

The world of judicious readers has long since decided that point. Apart from the moving central figure, the book is a wonderful revelation of the strange seafaring types of many nations whose minds Mr. Conrad first pictured for us with patient artistry. He would not be annoyed, we learn, at the idea that this book was the one of his own that he liked best. His remark concerning the reality of the hero is eminently characteristic:

"One sunny morning, in the commonplace surroundings of an Eastern roadstead, I saw his form pass by—appealing—significant—under a cloud—perfectly silent. Which is as it should be. It was for me, with all the sympathy of which I was capable, to seek fit words for his meaning. He was 'one of us'".

"Maria of the Monastero Vecchio." By R. Kingsley Lester. Simpkin, Marshall. 2s. 6d. net.

The author of this little book died young, perhaps, when he had just begun to find himself after experimenting in life. His boyishness and zeal for thought and adventure were attractive, and he had the larger vision which removes selfishness. His story is slight, but the charm of Italy is about it, the Italy of pleasant fields and flowers and peasants aristocratic in their fine taste and simple manners. John Perceval, an English artist, chanced on Maria in a convent garden and married her without inquiring into her antecedents. When, after some hesitation, he came home to his typical English family, there was trouble about this, and more trouble because he had too good a conceit of himself as an artist. Maria put it all right in the end.

Occasionally immature or awkward in the choice of words, the book shows real discernment. The conversations among the family after the home-coming are capitally done. We can believe in the conventional father and mother and the attitude of the sisters. The hardness of the pleasure-loving world is neatly hit off, and the end is not dowered with the sentiment that an ordinary writer would have applied to it. The sketch, in fact, reveals a mind that might with independence, sincerity, and the sense of beauty have gone far in human service.

"Off Shore." By "Tafrail." Pearson. 1s. net.

There is no particular art about the stories in this little book. The climax is generally obvious, and the incidents belong to the now familiar life of the Navy. Still the author, as we noticed in our review last year of "Pincher Martin, O.D." has a thorough and first-hand knowledge of his subject, and revels in little

details which are not generally known. We learn, for instance, that the anti-aircraft guns called "Archibald" on land are styled "Gwennie" in the Navy. We find examples of the playful ragging which goes on, and we discover from the author's own testimony that "the North Sea is by far the best cure for a cold in the head."

## BUSINESS AND THE CITY.

TO be a shipowner—otherwise a holder of shipping shares—in these days is to invite accusation of being an unconscionable profiteer. Has not Mr. Bonar Law disclosed how an investment of a few hundreds promptly grows into thousands in the hands of the shipowners? Hence may it not follow that millions have swollen into billions? Unfortunately for shareholders in the big shipping companies this deduction is incorrect, and a very brief inquiry suffices to prove the fallacy of it. Here is the dividend record of a few leading companies for the last few years:

	1911.	1912.	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Cunard...	7½	10	10	20	20	20
Elder Dempster	10	10	8	8	9	10
Furness Withy	10	10	10	10	20	20
Lampart and Holt	—	8	8	8	10	10
Oceanic (White Star)...	60	30	65	35	65	20*
P. and O.	15	15	15	15	15	18
Royal Mail	5	6	6	nil.	6	7

\* Capital increased from £750,000 to £3,750,000.

Nobody suggests that shipping concerns have not done well during the war, and there is no denying that tramp steamers have made enormous profits for their owners. Many of the latter have reaped their harvest and gone out of the business, leaving companies and shareholders who have formed the backbone of the shipping industry to suffer for sins which they have not committed. The following table has some interest as showing the highest and lowest prices in recent years of our representative shipping shares:

	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.
Cunard Ordinary—					
Highest ..	1½	1½	3½	5½	4½
Lowest ..	1½	1½	1½	3½	3½
Furness Withy—					
Highest ..	1½	1½	1½	3	2½
Lowest ..	1½	1½	1½	1½	2½
P. and O. Def.—					
Highest ..	350	325	293½	347	332
Lowest ..	262	260	250	270	295
Royal Mail—					
Highest ..	143	115½	105½	134½	119½
Lowest ..	98	87½	62½	97½	110

It might perhaps be argued that dividends are not a true gauge to shipping profits, for there are always suspicious, and oft-times misguided, persons who imagine that directors are hiding their profits away like skeletons in the board room cupboards. But surely the aim of all directors of public companies is to provide as large dividends as are compatible with sound finance, having regard to experience in the past and prospects of the future. Experience shows that the shipping industry, apart from the obvious hazards of the sea, is one of cycles of prosperity and depression, and the average return to the investor over any number of years is very small. Only by the strictest conservatism in finance and accumulation of resources to meet bad times and heavy losses can a shipping concern maintain regular dividends. The future holds in store greater difficulties and keener foreign competition for British shipowners than has ever been faced before, and directors would be guilty of criminal neglect if they failed to make the fullest possible financial provision to meet possible labour troubles and inevitable competition from neutrals equipped with unprecedented cash resources gathered during the war, to say nothing of the probability of violent State-aided efforts by German shipowners to reap the full commercial benefit of the submarine campaign. If the shipping companies have been able to set aside money for waging the coming trade war, so much the



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misery prevail owing to lack of employ-  
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now engaged in spinning, weaving, and making clothes, etc., and in some  
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has already raised and distributed over £140,000 for relief work amongst  
the suffering victims of the war in France, Holland, and Russia. The  
work is carried on by about 200 of the Society's representatives.

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have already been provided in 26 communes in France, and  
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over £1,500 per week is re-  
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information that may be desired.

better for the country. Unfortunately many politicians have yet to learn that shipping is the Empire's most vital industry.

The troubles in Russia are bad enough in all conscience, but it is a mistake to imagine that Petrograd is Russia. In that country of mighty distances and poor communications there must be many millions who are carrying on quite oblivious to the excitement of the capital. This is an important consideration for shareholders in Russian mining companies. The properties are hundreds of miles away from the whirligig of political disruption and military disorganisation, and it is highly probable that when the cables and mails resume their normal commercial functions they will bring news of undisturbed progress on most of the fields in which London companies are interested. Undoubtedly the general situation in Russia is bad; but it is not necessarily so hopeless as some shortsighted individuals appear to imagine. The ultimate effect of the revolution must be favourable to the expansion of Russia's industries and the development of her resources. Wages and cost of materials are increasing in all parts of the world, but eventually, if not soon, there should be compensating influences in Russia. The chairman of one of the big oil companies mentioned this week that under the new régime the foreigner working there has been granted the same privileges as to holding lands, mining concessions, and shares in Russian undertakings as had heretofore been reserved exclusively for Russian subjects. Probably the worst trial to be faced by shareholders in Russian concerns in the next few years is taxation; but that cannot be helped.

### INSURANCE.

#### NATIONAL MUTUAL LIFE OF AUSTRALASIA.

**O**CCASIONALLY it becomes imperative to recollect the origin and objects of a life office before forming an opinion of the work which has been accomplished. For example, the National Mutual Life Association of Australasia, Ltd., although purely a mutual society, granting its members policies giving participation in profits, was never intended to pay liberal bonuses. The idea of its founder was to provide mutual life assurance at the lowest cost compatible with safety, and distribute from time to time any surplus that might accrue. For this reason the premium charges were based on an exceptionally modest scale, and the members paid, and still pay, very little more than was charged for non-profit policies in 1869, when the association began business. In view of these facts, the bonuses recently declared in respect of the 1913-16 triennium must be considered remarkably good, the reversionary additions allotted being at the same rate as at the previous investigation, as on 30 September 1913. Owing to the method of distributing surplus adopted by the association it is impossible to fix the precise value of these additions, but the valuation disclosed a surplus of £759,534, against £650,024 in 1913; and the reversionary bonuses allotted will amount to about £1,300,000, or some £200,000 more than on the previous occasion. Including interim bonuses paid, profits amounting to £782,913 were made during the three years; and it further appears that the large sum of £132,958 was used in strengthening the basis of the valuation, the policy adopted at the two preceding investigations being thus continued. The total surplus which had accumulated during the triennium must therefore have been £915,871, or 27.75 per cent. of the total premiums—new and renewal—received during the period.

In recent years this Melbourne office has made notable strides. Under the shadow of war conditions its new business has contracted, but the renewal premium income has continued to rapidly expand, funds have increased apace, the net rate of interest earned has risen, and expenditure has been greatly reduced. Comparing 1913 with 1916 results, we find that the policies issued decreased from 13,609 to 11,005, and the sums assured from £3,647,812 to £3,235,845; while the new annual premiums, at £133,483, showed slight expansion. The former sensational growth of the new business was therefore clearly checked by the war; but in the three years the total premiums increased from £985,578 to £1,164,579, the funds from £8,000,461 to £10,127,573, the interest yielded by

them from £366,664 to £480,326, and the average rate earned from £4 15s. 11d. to £4 18s. 5d. per cent. All these gains are significantly large, and go far to explain why surplus accumulated at the rate of about £300,000 per annum during a period when war claims amounting to £134,463 were received and taxation was increased.

Other causes of the prosperity enjoyed are, however, more interesting and instructive to study. Between 1910, when only small bonuses could be declared, and 1913 the cost per cent. of collecting and managing the renewal premiums was considerably reduced—from 11.89 to 9.65 per cent. thereof; but the burden of expenditure on the new premium income remained practically unchanged. During the recent triennium, on the other hand, good progress was made in both directions, the renewal expenses being further lowered to 8.66 per cent., and those relating to new business from 75 to 62 per cent. As a result of this continued, or, rather, extended improvement, the management were able to report a percentage of total expenses to total premiums (excluding single premiums) of only 14.67 per cent.—an obviously reasonable ratio in view of the very moderate premiums paid by the members. Indeed, there is now apparently no reason why this office should not become noted alike for low premiums and good bonuses. In the last three years several improvements occurred. Expenses were materially reduced, the margin of unvalued interest widened, the average sum assured increased, the normal mortality (excluding war claims) became lighter, and the business obtained was of a more permanent and valuable character.

Indeed, the valuation reports made by Mr. E. J. Stock, the general manager and actuary, show that between 1913 and 1916 the policies in force increased from 112,183 to 123,867 in number, and from £27,922,071 to £33,698,831 in amount; also that the average amount assured per policy increased from £263 to £285, and the average annual premium from £3.6 to £3.9 per cent. of the sum assured. Mr. Stock further points out that, despite war mortality, the claim experience of the association had remained favourable, the total claims being only 77.2 per cent. of the amount set apart for their payment; and, secondly, that the amount of interest earned was equal to a return of £5 os. 3d. per cent. on the assurance fund.

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## EBBW VALE.

THE FIFTIETH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the Ebbw Vale Steel, Iron and Coal Company, Limited, was held on Wednesday, Colonel Sir Charles Allen, V.D., chairman of the company, presiding.

The Chairman said:—Gentlemen, it has been my pleasing privilege to address you at many previous general meetings. This is, however, a particularly gratifying occasion, as I am able to announce that we are holding the jubilee, or fiftieth, meeting since the formation of the company under the Limited Liability Act. It is not my intention to weary you by alluding to the eventful career and critical periods this company has from time to time experienced, but I venture to think it is an opportunity of mentioning that we are one of the few South Wales iron and steel producing firms which have successfully weathered the severe storms which wrecked so many of our neighbours, and your directors are able to-day to present you with one of the most encouraging and gratifying balance-sheets ever produced during the eventful career of this old company. We might reasonably regard ourselves as one of the survivors of the fittest, but it would have been impossible to attain the present condition of prosperity without the courage and determination of the board to build up and maintain your property and plant upon the highest scale of efficiency. It has taken years of judicious labour to attain this satisfactory condition. Therefore it must not be imagined because we are able to-day to recommend an increased dividend that it is altogether due to the improved condition of business and somewhat inflated prices owing to the excessive demand for war material. Our main success must be attributed to the fact that for many years we have been rectifying past errors, building up our works upon most modern and scientific lines, and providing our workmen with comfortable cottages and comfortable surroundings. Taking to-day's position of affairs, it is perfectly certain that the only rapid economical recovery from the terrible ravages of the war we are now experiencing reposes in the successful development of our home resources on the most scientific lines by our large manufacturing concerns. Your board have always realised the importance of this policy.

I now beg to invite your attention to the balance-sheet already circulated amongst the shareholders. Comparatively speaking, excepting a few items, there is little difference between these figures and those shown on the balance-sheet of last year. Taking the liabilities side, it will be observed that the authorised ordinary capital last year was £1,000,000. This has been increased by an addition of £250,000, in accordance with the resolution passed at the extraordinary general meeting last year. An application was made to the Treasury for power to increase the issued capital by £600,000, mainly for the purpose of paying the balance of purchase-moneys for our iron ore enterprise in Northamptonshire, and for the share capital of Powell's Tillery Steam Coal Company and John Lancaster and Co., Ltd. Besides these additional properties, very large extensions were being made in the company's works in order to assist the Government as far as possible in the urgent demand for steel and other products. Of the £600,000 intended to be issued, the company only obtained power to create £250,000, a sum quite inadequate to meet the company's capital requirements.

Whilst needing to meet the liability for what may be termed outside extensions, it must also be borne in mind that, owing to the greatly increased cost of labour, iron ore, pitwood, and all stores used in the works, it requires in our days more than £4 to do the work of £2 in pre-war times. The Mortgage Debentures remained the same as last year. The item "Sundry Creditors" includes a very large sum representing ordinary current accounts attributable to the high cost of materials. The total liability is £1,344,725, against £885,632 last year, an increase of £459,093. This increase not only covers the increased cost of all purchases, whether for capital or trading account, but also includes balance of purchase-moneys on the additional properties acquired during the year, as well as provision for war taxation, excess profits tax, and other reserves, and the advances for War Loans. Large as the item appears, it is more than balanced by the increase in stock, debtors, and investments.

The reserve account was nil in 1916, and now stands at £50,000, being the amount voted by the shareholders last year. This year you are asked to appropriate a further £50,000 to the same account. Those shareholders who have attended these meetings for many years will remember that the West Somerset Mineral Railway guarantee is an old-standing liability. It is automatically disappearing, and I am delighted to mention to-day that that will expire in September, 1919—in another two years. Taking the property and assets side of the account, there has been a substantial addition to the book value of the company's property, the amount added this year, after writing off depreciation, being £259,892. This amount consists of expenditure during the year upon the Northamptonshire iron ore mines and properties, by-product coke-ovens, important extensions to the blast furnace plant, steel works, and other branches of the company's undertaking. Besides, we have built a considerable number of railway wagons. The sale of property amounted to £1,366, against £895 in 1916, the proceeds of the sale of cottages to the company's tenants and employees, in pursuance of the policy adopted by the board years ago to encourage the ownership by the workmen of their own dwelling-houses.

An amount of £13,778, you will observe, has been expended on new works, and has been written off against revenue in addition to depreciation. Stocks on hand and sundry debtors grouped together amount to £777,642, against £560,568 last year, an increase this year of £217,074. Dealing with the item of investments, these show a net increase of £332,298, which includes instalments paid to date of £83,255 on account of Five per Cent. War Stock, the total increase, including the item for stocks and sundry debtors, amounting to £549,372, against a total increase of creditors, to which I have already alluded, of £459,093, leaving a net improvement for the year of £90,279. Our Two and a Half per Cent. Consols were converted this year into Four and a Half per Cent. War Stock, and the balance of this stock, amounting to £11,504, has since been converted into Five per Cent. War Stock. Shares and Debentures show an increase of £250,333.

Taking the profit and loss account, our general expenses are down £450, and legal expenses are reduced by £567. The interest on Debentures represents the annual charge upon £450,000 issued Debentures, and remains unchanged. The interest on special loans, £36,071, is

incurred in respect of the temporary financial accommodation required in connection with the acquisition of the various properties and developments, to which I have already alluded, and about which I intend to say something later. You will notice we continue to make liberal war allowances to officials and dependents of the company's workmen. This year the figure shows a reduction of £13,910, due to the fact that many of the men have returned to work from the front and dependents and others have obtained employment. Still, it is worthy of mention that the total amount under this heading paid by the Ebbw Vale Co. since the commencement of the war now exceeds £120,000. The balance of profits for this year stands at £356,949, after making provision for estimated liability for excess profits duty, income-tax, and depreciation; it is £2,740 greater than the previous year's figure. It is worthy of note that local rates, workmen's compensation, and national insurance are equivalent to a dividend of 6.75 per cent. upon the issued Ordinary share capital of the company. Assuming the report and balance-sheet should be adopted, the carry forward will be somewhat less than the amount brought in from last year, but it must be remembered that the carry forward last year included provision for excess profits tax, whereas this year the amount is included in sundry creditors. You will observe from this financial statement of affairs the importance of a substantial addition to our capital, and the board have taken steps again to apply to the Treasury for permission to issue the requisite additional capital to carry on satisfactorily and economically our increased undertaking and business.

Alluding to the interesting item of output, during the past year we have naturally experienced difficulties in the way of securing labour. Still, the outputs of material have been fairly well maintained, and compare favourably with the previous results. Our collieries have raised 1,812,750 tons during the year, an increase of 10,900 tons on the output of 1916. Our output of pig-iron amounted to 242,975 tons, a decrease of 679 tons as compared with 1916. The steel we have produced amounts to 200,350 tons, a decrease of 457 tons on the output of the previous year. Our by-product coke ovens and other coke plants all continue to work most satisfactorily, and our output this year was 351,000 tons, an increase of 84,000 tons on the previous year. A very important item is that of wages. During the year the Ebbw Vale Company alone has paid the enormous amount of £1,747,155. As an indication of what the Local War Savings Associations connected with the works departments of the company and the schools in the district have done towards the War Loan, I might mention shortly that there are 4,568 members, who have taken up 9,875 war savings certificates, representing the respectable sum of £7,653, in the Ebbw Vale district alone, and as regards the Five per Cent. War Loan taken up by the three associated colliery companies on behalf of the workmen employed, who are promptly repaying the amount so advanced by weekly deductions from their wages, the amount is substantially £28,500, the number of workmen participating in this arrangement being 3,010. Those present will remember that two years ago I had the gratification of announcing the purchase of an extensive virgin iron-ore field in Northamptonshire, explaining the long-felt want and the great advantages to be derived by the company owning its own iron-ore deposits. Since then extensive developments have been in progress, which promise to turn out quite up to our expectations. Your board have taken the deepest interest in closely watching these developments by paying periodical visits of inspection, and whilst it was evident that the management is somewhat handicapped for labour, the contractors erecting the calcine kilns are making excellent progress consistent with the difficulties they experience in obtaining the structural ironwork, owing, of course, to the pressing demands for war material.

The fusion of additional local collieries is also a highly important step in the right direction. It will have the effect of increasing outputs, with lessened productive costs, eliminating reckless neighbouring competition with each other, and strengthening our hands against foreign rivals. By this arrangement the Ebbw Vale Company will eventually control an output of something like 5,000,000 to 6,000,000 tons of coal per annum. It is my intention to ask Mr. Beynon to be good enough to second the adoption of the report, and to give you a few details concerning our colliery properties. As regards the iron and steel plant, extensive additions are still in progress, encouraged by the Government, in the way of new blast furnaces, coke ovens, electrical plants, and accessories, which, when complete, will practically add 50 per cent. to our power of output. To summarise the magnitude of this vast undertaking, we shall eventually be finding employment for between 30,000 and 40,000 men. You will, therefore, understand that our progressive programme has been materially increased during the past year. With the rapid growth of the company's business, the board realise the absolute importance of consolidating its financial position, which must lead to a substantial increase in our capital.

I should, however, be failing in my duty if I omitted to express the richly deserved compliments to those who have so nobly fulfilled their duty during the past strenuous and difficult year's working. I allude to our official staff, whose numbers since the outbreak of war have been seriously depleted by some hundreds of its members being called to the colours. Still, the remnant left have never flinched from the additional severe tax on their unflinching energy, and I feel sure you will gladly allow me to say on this occasion that they had all won our deep admiration and respect.

We must not forget, however, that the heaviest burden of responsibility, the constant source of anxiety in supervising such a gigantic establishment, rests mainly on the shoulders of our indefatigable managing director, Mr. Mills, whose unbending energy and business ability are never-failing, and set a noble and wonderful example to those under him. He is never happier than when engaged upon large complicated problems to solve, and assisting and doing his best for the company; but I deeply regret to say that, in the midst of these surrounding responsibilities, his happiness during the past year was sadly disturbed by the heaviest blow any man can suffer, and I feel sure I am echoing your sentiments in expressing our heartfelt sympathy and condolences.

Gentlemen, I beg now formally to move: "That the directors' report and balance-sheet be approved and adopted; that the interim dividend paid on the Preference shares for the half-year ended September 30th, 1916, be confirmed; that a dividend be declared at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum, less income-tax, on the Preference shares for the half-year ended March 31st, 1917, to the shareholders on the register on July 12th, 1917; that a dividend of 15 per cent., less income-tax, be declared on the Ordinary shares for the year ended March 31st, 1917, to the shareholders on the register on July 12th, 1917." I may say, gentlemen, that with your loyal support we hope to carry on into brighter days of peace and prosperity.

Mr. J. W. Beynon seconded the resolution, which was passed unanimously.